Exemption of Excise Duty on Jams and Jelly

*615. SHRI T. VENKATRAM REDDY:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether jams and jellys are considered items of mass consumption and have full exemption of excise duty;

(b) what is the approximate value of jams and jellys sold in a year; and

(c) whether these items can be classified as luxury items?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) and (c) Jams and jellys are consumed by a cross-section of the people, from among the masses, and are presently fully exempted from excise duty. Therefore, they are not considered as luxury items.

(b) The approximate value of jams and jellys sold in a year, including exports, is Rs. 62.50 crores.

Commission on the Sale of Postage Stamps

*616. SHRI JANARDAN YADAV: Will L the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have increased the commission from existing \V_2 per cent to 5 per cent on sale of postage stamps by private licencee postage stamps sellers and lifted the maximum sale of stamps upto Rs. 500/- a day;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to increase the incentive money from 2 per cent for the sale of postage stamps and postal stationery at the stamp vending counters of post offices and RMS offices to increase productivity, motivate staff for better productivity and compensate them for additional out turn and improve customer service; and

(c) whether Government also propose to dispense with the limit of incentive money, i.e., ceiling of 33.33 per cent of the emoluments arid allow full incentive money at the rate of 2 per cent for the total sale in a day?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) There is no proposal at present to increase the incentive payable to departmental/ED stamp vendors and to dispense with the ceiling on the amount of incentive.

Encouragement to Textile Exports

*617. SHRI J.S. RAJU:
SHRI TINDEVANAM G. VENKATRAM AN:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state;

(a) which State leads in the field of textile exports;

(b) whether Government motivate competition among States for exporting quality textiles to foreign countries;

(c) which State in the country tops the list of pattern varieties;

(d) which State specialises in silk textiles;

(e) what are the plans of Government to further boost silk textile exports; and

(f) what were the total earning from silk textile exports from 1990 to 1994, year-wise and State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): (a) to (c) Apart from direct exports by manufactures, the textile products produced at one centre are also purchased by merchant exporters from other centres and exported. That being so, textile export figures are not maintained State-wise. It is, therefore, not feasible to indicate the State which leads in the field of textile exports or in the list of pattern varieties in India.

The Government and the Textile Export Promotion Councils have been encouraging exporters of various States to

improve quality and to become internationally competitive so that the country's export performance may improve. However, these efforts are not aimed at generating competition among the various States of the country.

(d) While Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh specialise in mulberry-silk textiles, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh specialise in tasar-silk textiles.

(e) and (f) The total earnings from export of silk textile products during the years 1990-91 to 1993-94 (April 93-Jan. 94) are as under:-

Year	Rs. in crores
1990-91	435.94
1991-92	670.98
1992-93	734.22
1993-94 (Apr 93-Jan. 94)	546.86

The Government have taken several measures to boost exports including that of silk textiles and other textile products. The important ones among these are introduction of a unified market determined exchange rate system, covertibility of the rupee on current account, facilitating import of capital goods at concessional duty for export production, increased availability of export credit, permission to retain Foreign Exchange receipts to the extent of 25% in foreign currency account, etc.

Besides, the Government is providing assistance to the Indian Silk Export Promotion Council for undertaking various export activities such as participation in Fairs, sponsoring of Sales cum Study Tours and Buyer Seller Meets, Product Development, Publicity in foreign trade magazines, dissemination of overseas trade information among the exporters, etc.

Power Plans at Yamuna Nagar and Faridabad

*618. SHRI S.S. SURJEWALA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chief Minister of Haryana has executed an agreement with an israeli firm for construction of thermal power plant at Yamuna Nagar and gas-based power plant at Faridabad during his recent visit to Israel; if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the thermal power plant at Yamuna Nagar. and gas-based plant at Faridabad are being constructed by the NTPC and the Haryana State Electricity Board have nothing to do with the construction of these two units; if so, whether NTPC had authorised the Chief Minister to execute an agreement with a firm of Israel to construct/finance these projects;

(c) whether any State of Indian Union can enter into a direct agreement' negotiation with a firm of foreign country without the mediation of Government of India;

(d) if so, what are the relevant rules; and

(e) if not, what is the justification of the action taken by Chief Minister of Haryana?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI N.K.P. -SALVE): (a) and (b) The Faridabad gas based power project is proposed to be executed by the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) with Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) assistance. As regards the Yamunanagar Thermal Power Project, the Eisenberg Group of Companies, and the Haryana State Electricity Board have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at Tel Aviv on the 5th April, 1994 in the presence of the Chief Minister of Haryana and with the full knowledge of the Central Government to form a Joint Venture for the implementation of this project.